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(54)

PUMP ASSEMBLY AND CONTROLLING METHOD

(57)

The present disclosure provides a pump assembly (1) comprising a pump unit (2), an electrical drive motor (203) for driving the pump unit (2), and a control unit (201) for controlling the drive motor (203), wherein the control unit (201) comprises a frequency converter (209), a voltage converter (207) and a controller (211), wherein the voltage converter (207) is configured to provide an input voltage (U_{in}) to the frequency converter (209), the input voltage (U_{in}) being adjustable within a

voltage range between a minimum input voltage (U_{min}) and a maximum input voltage (U_{max}), wherein the controller (211) is configured to determine an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor (203), the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) during operation of the pump unit (2), and wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit (2).

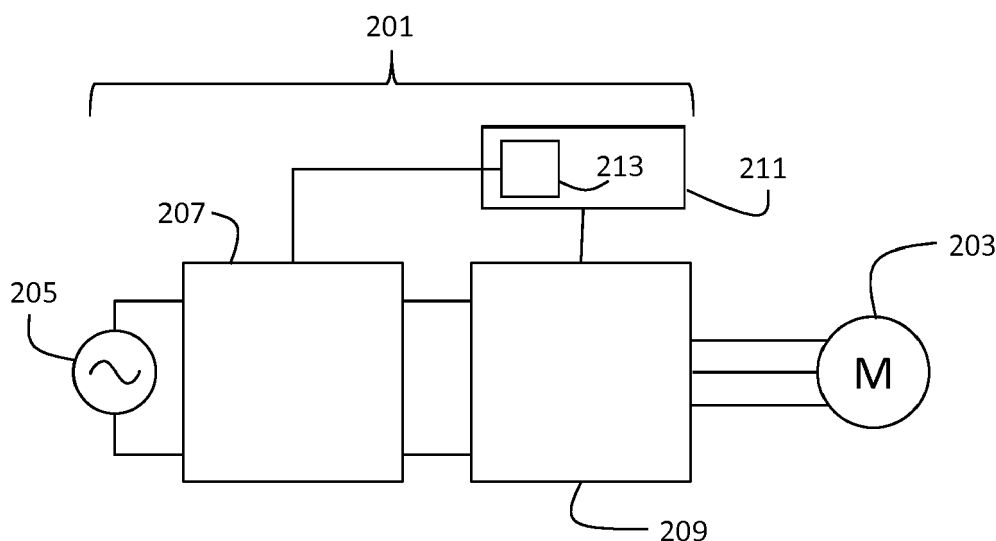


Fig. 2

Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to pump assemblies, in particular to speed controlled wet rotor centrifugal pumps, and a method for controlling an electrical drive motor for driving such a pump. Such pumps in the power range of 5W to 3kW are typically used in circulation pumps of house heating systems.

BACKGROUND

[0002] It is a general goal of pump design to reduce the overall power consumption of a pump as much as possible. Speed controlled wet rotor pumps usually comprise a frequency converter configured to drive the motor at a desired speed according to the required pumping power. In order to drive the motor with a pulse width modulated signal having a sinusoidal shape, the switching frequency of the frequency converter must be high, which introduces switching losses in the frequency converter.

[0003] EP 2 133 991 describes a speed controlled pump in which the input voltage to the frequency converter is adapted by a voltage converter to the required output voltage aiming for a maximum modulation index for minimising switching losses in the frequency converter.

SUMMARY

[0004] In contrast to such known pumps, embodiments of the present disclosure provide a pump assembly with further reduced power consumption.

[0005] In accordance with a first aspect of the present disclosure, a pump assembly is provided comprising a pump unit, an electrical drive motor for driving the pump unit, and a control unit for controlling the drive motor. The control unit comprises a frequency converter, a voltage converter and a controller, wherein the voltage converter is configured to provide an input voltage U_{in} to the frequency converter, the input voltage being adjustable within a voltage range between a minimum input voltage U_{min} and a maximum output voltage U_{max} . The controller is configured to determine an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter during operation of the pump unit, and configured to tune the input voltage depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit. The controller may be part of the frequency converter or of the voltage converter or a separate component of the control unit.

[0006] Optionally, the controller may be configured to determine an actual combined power consumption of the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter, and to tune the input voltage depending on the determined actual combined power consumption. Thereby, not only the switching losses in the frequency converter can be minimised, but in addition the conversion losses in the voltage converter and the power losses in the motor.

[0007] Optionally, the controller may thus be configured to tune the input voltage so that the actual power consumption is minimised. To achieve this, a minimum power loss (MPL) algorithm may be applied to find the optimal input voltage for achieving the lowest power consumption of the combined system comprising the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter. For instance, the MPL algorithm may increase the input voltage from U_0 to U_1 and compares the power consumption P_0 for U_0 and the power consumption P_1 for U_1 . If the power consumption P_1 for U_1 is smaller than the power consumption P_0 for U_0 , the input voltage may be further increased to U_2 . If the power consumption P_1 for U_1 is higher than the power consumption P_0 for U_0 , the input voltage may be decreased from U_0 to U'_1 , and then further decreased to U'_2 if the power consumption has reduced by ΔP from U_0 to U'_1 . This process may be iteratively repeated with constant $\Delta U = U_0 - U_1 = U_1 - U_2 = \dots$ or preferably variable $\Delta U = f(\Delta P)$ to find the optimal input voltage with the least power consumption as quickly as possible.

[0008] Optionally, the controller may be configured to determine a rate of change in actual power consumption in at least one of the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter during operation of the pump, wherein the controller is configured to tune the input voltage only if the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold, or if a parameter relating to the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold for that parameter. For instance, the MPL algorithm may be switched off when the power consumption is rising too quickly and switched on when the power consumption is stable within the defined threshold.

[0009] Optionally, the controller may be configured to increase the input voltage in a pre-defined manner if the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is above the threshold. For instance, the input voltage may be increased at a constant rate or steps as long as the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is above the defined threshold. If the power consumption is rising too quickly, an input voltage achieving a maximum modulation index may be applied. The modulation index M shall be defined herein as the ratio between the effective AC output voltage U_{out} ,

i.e. the output phase voltage relative to a neutral potential, of the frequency converter and the maximum effective AC

output voltage $U_{out,max}$, which is limited by the frequency converter input DC voltage U_{in} , i.e. $M = \frac{U_{out}}{U_{out,max}} = \frac{U_{out}}{\frac{U_{in}}{2 \cdot \sqrt{2}} \cdot 1,15}$

[0010] Optionally, the controller may be configured to determine the actual electrical power consumption in pre-defined temporal intervals or in an essentially continuous manner to tune the input voltage accordingly.

[0011] Optionally, the controller may be configured to determine a power consumption differential ΔP between the power consumption when the input voltage is provided and the power consumption when another input voltage was previously provided, wherein tuning the input voltage includes changing the input voltage by a voltage differential ΔU , wherein the sign and/or the amount of the voltage differential ΔU is dependent on the determined power consumption differential ΔP .

[0012] Optionally, the drive motor may be operable in a field-weakening mode and a non-field-weakening mode, wherein the controller is configured to tune the input voltage within a voltage range between a minimum input voltage U_{min} and a reference voltage U_{ref} in the field weakening mode, and wherein the controller is configured to tune the input voltage within a voltage range between the reference voltage U_{ref} and a maximum input voltage U_{max} in the non-field-weakening mode, wherein $U_{min} < U_{ref} < U_{max}$. The reference voltage U_{ref} may be defined herein as the input voltage

U_{in} in non-field-weakening mode for which the modulation index M is maximal, i.e. $M_{max} = \frac{U_{out}}{\frac{U_{ref}}{2 \cdot \sqrt{2}} \cdot 1,15} \approx 1$. The effective

AC output voltage U_{out} of the frequency converter to the motor is limited by the input voltage U_{in} from the voltage converter

to the frequency converter resulting in a maximum effective AC output voltage $U_{out,max} = \frac{U_{in}}{2 \cdot \sqrt{2}} \cdot 1,15$.

[0013] Herein, the term "field-weakening mode" shall mean that the stator current partly reduces the total magnetic flux, because it is phase-shifted with respect to the rotor magnetic flux by more than 90° . The term "non-field-weakening mode" shall mean that a stator current has a phase-shift of 90° or less with respect to the rotor magnetic flux such that no component of the stator current reduces the total magnetic flux.

[0014] Optionally, the frequency converter and the voltage converter are located on separate circuit boards, preferably separated by a housing wall.

[0015] Optionally, the pump unit comprises a wet rotor circulation pump for a heating or cooling system.

[0016] In accordance with a second aspect of the present disclosure, a method for controlling an electrical drive motor for driving a pump unit is provided, wherein a control unit of the electrical drive motor comprises a frequency converter and a voltage converter. The method comprises the following steps:

- providing an input voltage to the frequency converter by the voltage converter, wherein the input voltage is adjustable within a voltage range between U_{min} and U_{max} ,
- determining an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter during operation of the pump unit, and
- tuning the input voltage depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit.

[0017] Optionally, the step of tuning the input voltage includes tuning the input voltage so that the actual power consumption is minimised.

[0018] Optionally, the method may comprise a further step of determining a rate of change in actual power consumption in at least one of the drive motor, the frequency converter and the voltage converter during operation of the pump, and wherein tuning the input voltage includes the condition that the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold. Optionally, the step of tuning the input voltage includes increasing the input voltage in a pre-defined manner if said condition is not fulfilled.

[0019] Optionally, the step of determining the actual electrical power consumption includes determining the actual electrical power consumption in pre-defined temporal intervals or in an essentially continuous manner for tuning the input voltage accordingly.

[0020] Optionally, the step of tuning the input voltage includes tuning the input voltage within a voltage range between the minimum input voltage U_{min} and a reference voltage U_{ref} when the drive motor is operated in a field-weakening mode, and wherein tuning the input voltage includes tuning the input voltage within a voltage range between the reference voltage U_{ref} and the maximum input voltage U_{max} when the drive motor is operated in a non-field-weakening mode, wherein $U_{min} < U_{ref} < U_{max}$.

[0021] Optionally, the method may comprise a step of feeding back the reference voltage U_{ref} from the frequency converter to the voltage converter. In case of high fluctuations of the power consumption, the voltage converter may

then tune the input voltage to the reference voltage in non-field-weakening mode.

[0022] Optionally, the method may comprise a step of signalling the determined actual total power consumption to the frequency converter. The actual total power consumption may be the actual power consumption of the combined system of frequency converter, motor and voltage converter.

[0023] Optionally, the step of determining the actual total power consumption includes determining an approximate power consumption in the voltage converter based on a look-up table and/or a determined actual power consumption in the frequency converter and/or the input voltage.

[0024] Optionally, the method may comprise a step of determining a power consumption differential ΔP between the power consumption when the input voltage is provided and the power consumption when another input voltage was previously provided, wherein tuning the input voltage includes changing the input voltage by a voltage differential ΔU , wherein the sign and/or the amount of the voltage differential ΔU is dependent on the determined power consumption differential ΔP .

SUMMARY OF THE DRAWINGS

[0025] Embodiments of the present disclosure will now be described by way of example with reference to the following figures of which:

Fig. 1 shows a perspective view on an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 2 shows a schematic view on a control circuitry of a first example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 3 shows a power loss in the combined system of frequency converter and motor operating in non-field-weakening mode as a function of an input voltage to the frequency converter of an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 4 shows a power loss in the combined system of frequency converter and motor operating selectively in either field-weakening mode or non-field-weakening mode as a function of an input voltage to the frequency converter of an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 5 shows a vector diagram for operating an example of a pump assembly disclosed herein in non-field-weakening mode;

Fig. 6 shows a vector diagram for operating an example of a pump assembly disclosed herein in field-weakening mode;

Fig. 7 shows a power loss in a voltage converter as a function of an input voltage to the frequency converter of an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 8 shows a power loss in the combined system of frequency converter, motor and voltage converter as a function of an input voltage to the frequency converter of an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure;

Fig. 9 shows a schematic view on a control circuitry of a second example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure; and

Fig. 10 shows a schematic view on a minimum power loss (MPL) algorithm of an example of a pump assembly according to this disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0026] Fig. 1 shows a pump assembly 1 with a centrifugal pump unit 2, an input port 3 and an output port 5, wherein the input port 3 and an output port 5 are coaxially arranged on a pipe axis A on opposing sides of the pump unit 2. The input port 3 and the output port 5 comprise connector flanges 7, 9 for a connection to pipes (not shown). The pump unit 2 comprises a rotor axis R essentially perpendicular to the pipe axis A. A pump housing 11 of the pump unit 2 is essentially arranged between the input port 3 and the output port 5. The pump housing 11 comprises an impeller (not shown) for rotating around the rotor axis R and pumping fluid from the input port 3 to the output port 5. The impeller is driven by a motor (not shown) located in a motor housing 13 extending from the pump housing 11 along the rotor axis R to an electronics housing 15. The electronics housing 15 comprises a control unit 201 (see Fig. 2) for controlling a three-phase

synchronous permanent magnet drive motor 203.

[0027] The control circuitry shown in Fig. 2 comprises the control unit 201 for controlling the three-phase synchronous permanent magnet drive motor 203. The control unit 201 receives an AC supply voltage 205. This AC supply voltage 205 may be a 230V/110V line voltage or it may be a low AC supply voltage, e.g. 60V, provided by an internal or an external power supply unit (not shown). The control unit 201 comprises a voltage converter 207 and a frequency converter 209, wherein the voltage converter 207 receives the AC supply voltage 203 and provides a DC input voltage U_{in} to the frequency converter 209. The frequency converter 209 provides to each of the three phases of the drive motor 203 a pulse-width modulated AC output voltage U_{out} for driving the motor 203. The three phases are phase-shifted by 120° with respect to each other.

[0028] The control unit 201 further comprises a controller 211 controlling switches within the frequency converter 209. The controller 211 may be part of the frequency converter 209 or an extra circuitry. The controller 211 comprises a minimum power loss module 213 incorporating a minimum power loss (MPL) algorithm. The controller 201 is configured to determine an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor 203, the frequency converter 209 and the voltage converter 207, preferably an actual total power consumption of a combined system of motor 203, frequency converter 209 and voltage converter 207, during operation of the pump unit 2. The input voltage U_{in} provided by the voltage converter 207 is adjustable within a voltage range between U_{min} and U_{max} , wherein the controller 211 is configured to tune the input voltage U_{in} depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit 2.

[0029] As shown in Fig. 3, the power loss in the combined system of frequency converter 209 and motor 203 rises in non-field-weakening mode from a reference voltage U_{ref} with the input voltage U_{in} . The reference voltage U_{ref} may be

the input voltage U_{in} in non-field-weakening mode for which the modulation index $M = \frac{U_{out}}{U_{out,max}} = \frac{U_{out}}{\frac{U_{in}}{2 \cdot \sqrt{2}} \cdot 1,15}$ is maximal,

i.e. $M_{max} = \frac{U_{out}}{\frac{U_{ref}}{2 \cdot \sqrt{2}} \cdot 1,15} \approx 1$. Thus, for reducing the input voltage U_{in} below the reference voltage U_{ref} the motor 203 may

be operated in field-weakening mode. When selectively operated in field-weakening mode or non-field-weakening mode, the combined system of frequency converter 209 and motor 203 shows a minimum power loss $P_{loss,FC+M,min}$ (see Fig. 4) at an input voltage U_{in} that may differ from the reference voltage U_{ref} . For certain load cases, such input voltage U_{in} resulting in a minimum power loss $P_{loss,FC+M,min}$ may be in particular lower than the reference voltage U_{ref} such that it may be advantageous to operate in field-weakening mode. The voltage converter 207 is in principle more efficient when outputting higher input voltages U_{in} (see Fig. 7), but the combined system of frequency converter 209, motor 203 and voltage converter 207 shows a resulting minimum power loss $P_{loss,FC+M+VC,min}$ (see Fig. 8) at an input voltage U_{in} that may differ from the reference voltage U_{ref} . Thus, even including the power loss of the voltage converter, for certain load cases, such input voltage U_{in} resulting in a minimum power loss $P_{loss,FC+M,min}$ may be in particular lower than the reference voltage U_{ref} such that it may be advantageous to operate in field-weakening mode. The controller 211 may be configured to tune the input voltage U_{in} so that the power loss of the combined system of frequency converter 209, motor 203 and voltage converter 207 is at its minimum $P_{loss,FC+M+VC,min}$ as shown in Fig. 8.

[0030] The vector diagram in a rotating reference frame of Fig. 5 illustrates the phase relation between the main components in non-field weakening mode. A magnetic flux Ψ_{pm} of the permanent magnet is 90° phase-shifted with respect to a phase current I in a stator of the motor 203. An output voltage U_{out} of the frequency converter 209 into the stator of the motor 203 results from a resistive voltage drop $U_R = R \cdot I$, a back EMF U_E and an inductive voltage drop $U_L = \omega \cdot L \cdot I$, where an inductance L includes both a self-inductance and a phase-coupling inductance. The resistive voltage drop U_R and the back EMF U_E are in phase, and the inductive voltage drop U_L is 90° phase-shifted with respect to the resistive voltage drop U_R . In the example shown in Fig. 5, the modulation index M is maximal so that the output voltage U_{out} essentially equals a maximum output voltage $U_{out,max}$ illustrated by the circle. In non-field weakening mode, the drive motor 203 of the pump unit 2 disclosed herein may be operated at a maximum modulation index M_{max} , wherein the voltage converter 207 provides an input voltage U_{in} equal to the reference voltage U_{ref} to the frequency converter 209, i.e. $U_{in} = U_{ref}$.

[0031] In order to further reduce the total power consumption, the input voltage U_{in} may be decreased below the reference voltage U_{ref} , which is possible in field-weakening mode as shown in Fig. 6. The frequency converter 209 may shift the phase current I by an angle θ , whereby a magnetic flux $\Psi_m = I \cdot L \cdot \sin\theta$ is induced by the stator windings weakening the resulting magnetic flux in the motor $\Psi = \Psi_{pm} + \Psi_m$. The reduced magnetic flux in the motor Ψ would result in less torque and hydraulic output power of the pump, which may be compensated at part load by a higher phase current I while still consuming less power in total. If the motor 203 is operated at full load where the phase current I cannot be increased any further, the field-weakening mode may be less efficient, but that may be rarely the case. Most of the time, the motor 203 may be operated at part load, when a selective operation in field-weakening mode or non-

field weakening mode under appropriate tuning of the input voltage U_{in} may be most efficient. Herein, full load means that the frequency converter is fed with the maximum input power, whereas part load means that the frequency converter is fed with less than the maximum input power.

[0032] Thus, field-weakening mode means that the phase current partly reduces the total magnetic flux, because it is phase-shifted with respect to the rotor magnetic flux by more than 90° . In non-field-weakening mode, the phase current has a phase-shift of 90° or less with respect to the rotor magnetic flux such that no component of the phase current reduces the total magnetic flux. In order to measure such a phase shift, position sensors may be used. As an alternative or in addition to using position sensors measuring the phase shift angle θ , the output voltage U_{out} may be measured to determine whether a motor is running in field-weakening mode or non-field weakening mode. Having determined the magnetic flux Ψ , the resistance R , the inductance L , the motor speed ω and the phase current I , an output voltage $U_{out,calc}$ may be calculated as

$$U_{out,calc} = \sqrt{(U_E + U_R)^2 + U_L^2} = \sqrt{(\Psi \cdot \omega + I \cdot R)^2 + (\omega \cdot L \cdot I)^2}$$

under the assumption of non-field-weakening mode, i.e. a 90° phase-shift between U_L and U_R . If the measured output voltage U_{out} is lower than the calculated output voltage $U_{out,calc}$, the motor is running in field-weakening mode. Otherwise, it is running in non-field-weakening mode.

[0033] In the embodiment of Fig. 9, the controller 211 is part of the voltage converter 207 receiving the power loss in the frequency converter 209 and in the motor 203 via a feedback loop 215. Fig. 10 further describes the minimum power loss (MPL) algorithm of the minimum power loss (MPL) module 213 of the controller 211. In a first step, an initial input voltage U_{in} is provided to the frequency converter 209 by the voltage converter 207. The initial input voltage U_{in} is adjustable by an initial voltage differential ΔU_{in} so that U_{in} is variably adjustable within a voltage range between U_{min} and U_{max} . In a second step, an actual power consumption P_0 of at least one of the drive motor 203, the frequency converter 209 and the voltage converter 207 during operation of the pump unit 2 is determined and stored. The input voltage U_{in} is then varied by the initial voltage differential ΔU_{in} , and an actual power consumption P_1 of at least one of the drive motor 203, the frequency converter 209 and the voltage converter 207 during operation of the pump unit 2 is determined. The power consumptions P_1 and P_0 are then compared. If $P_1 < P_0$ the adjustment decreased the power consumption and the above steps may be repeated starting from the adjusted input voltage U_{in} until $P_1 \geq P_0$. If $P_1 \geq P_0$, the sign of ΔU_{in} may be changed to adjust U_{in} in the other direction. Thereby, the input voltage U_{in} is tuned depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit 2.

[0034] The voltage differential ΔU_{in} may not be constant, but may be a function of the power consumption differential ΔP . So, the smaller the power consumption differential $\Delta P = |P_1 - P_0|$ is, the smaller the voltage differential ΔU_{in} may be chosen. The MPL algorithm may switch back to the initial voltage differential ΔU_{in} once the total minimum power loss of the combined system of frequency converter 209, motor 203 and voltage converter 207 is reached at $P_{loss,FC+M+VC,min}$.

[0035] The controller 211 may further be configured to determine a rate of change in actual power consumption in at least one of the drive motor 203, the frequency converter 209 and the voltage converter 207 during operation of the pump 1, wherein the controller 211 is configured to tune the input voltage U_{in} only if the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold, i.e. the frequency converter 209 is operating in a steady power consumption within limits. If the actual power consumption is rising too quickly above limits, the MPL algorithm of Fig. 10 may be suspended until a steady power consumption within limits is reached. The controller 211 may then increase the input voltage U_{in} in a pre-defined manner, e.g. at a constant rate or steps of ΔU_{in} . The controller 211 may determine the actual electrical power consumption in pre-defined temporal intervals or in an essentially continuous manner to start tuning the input voltage U_{in} once the power consumption is stable within limits.

[0036] Where, in the foregoing description, integers or elements are mentioned which have known, obvious or foreseeable equivalents, then such equivalents are herein incorporated as if individually set forth. Reference should be made to the claims for determining the true scope of the present disclosure, which should be construed so as to encompass any such equivalents. It will also be appreciated by the reader that integers or features of the disclosure that are described as optional, preferable, advantageous, convenient or the like are optional and do not limit the scope of the independent claims.

[0037] The above embodiments are to be understood as illustrative examples of the disclosure. It is to be understood that any feature described in relation to any one embodiment may be used alone, or in combination with other features described, and may also be used in combination with one or more features of any other of the embodiments, or any combination of any other of the embodiments. While at least one exemplary embodiment has been shown and described, it should be understood that other modifications, substitutions and alternatives are apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art and may be changed without departing from the scope of the subject matter described herein, and this application is intended to cover any adaptations or variations of the specific embodiments discussed herein.

[0038] In addition, "comprising" does not exclude other elements or steps, and "a" or "one" does not exclude a plural number. Furthermore, characteristics or steps which have been described with reference to one of the above exemplary embodiments may also be used in combination with other characteristics or steps of other exemplary embodiments described above. Method steps may be applied in any order or in parallel or may constitute a part or a more detailed version of another method step. It should be understood that there should be embodied within the scope of the patent warranted hereon all such modifications as reasonably and properly come within the scope of the contribution to the art. Such modifications, substitutions and alternatives can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the disclosure, which should be determined from the appended claims and their legal equivalents.

Claims

1. A pump assembly (1) comprising

- a pump unit (2),
- an electrical drive motor (203) for driving the pump unit (2), and
- a control unit (201) for controlling the drive motor (203),

wherein the control unit (201) comprises a frequency converter (209), a voltage converter (207) and a controller (211), wherein the voltage converter (207) is configured to provide an input voltage (U_{in}) to the frequency converter (209), the input voltage (U_{in}) being adjustable within a voltage range between a minimum input voltage (U_{min}) and a maximum input voltage (U_{max}),

wherein the controller (211) is configured to determine an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor (203), the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) during operation of the pump unit (2), and wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit (2).

2. The pump assembly (1) according to claim 1, wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) so that the actual power consumption is minimised.

3. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the controller (211) is configured to determine a rate of change in actual power consumption in at least one of the drive motor (203), the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) during operation of the pump unit (2), wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) only if the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold.

4. The pump assembly (1) according to claim 3, wherein the controller (211) is configured to increase the input voltage (U_{in}) in a pre-defined manner if the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is above the threshold.

5. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the controller (211) is configured to determine the actual electrical power consumption in pre-defined temporal intervals or in an essentially continuous manner to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) accordingly.

6. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the controller (211) is configured to determine a power consumption differential (ΔP) between the power consumption when the input voltage (U_{in}) is provided and the power consumption when another input voltage (U_{in}) was previously provided, wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes changing the input voltage by a voltage differential (ΔU), wherein the sign and/or the amount of the voltage differential (ΔU) is dependent on the determined power consumption differential (ΔP).

7. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the drive motor (203) is operable in a field-weakening mode and a non-field-weakening mode, wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) within a voltage range between the minimum input voltage (U_{min}) and a reference voltage (U_{ref}) in the field weakening mode, and wherein the controller (211) is configured to tune the input voltage (U_{in}) within a voltage range between the reference voltage (U_{ref}) and the maximum input voltage (U_{max}) in the non-field-weakening mode, wherein $U_{min} < U_{ref} < U_{max}$.

8. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims,

wherein the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) are located on separate circuit boards, preferably separated by a housing wall.

9. The pump assembly (1) according to any of the preceding claims,
wherein the pump unit (2) comprises a wet rotor circulation pump for a heating or cooling system.
10. A method for controlling an electrical drive motor (203) for driving a pump unit (2), wherein a control unit (211) of the electrical drive motor (203) comprises a frequency converter (209) and a voltage converter (207), the method comprising:
 - providing an input voltage (U_{in}) to the frequency converter (209) by the voltage converter (207), wherein the input voltage (U_{in}) is adjustable within a voltage range between a minimum input voltage (U_{min}) and a maximum input voltage (U_{max}),
 - determining an actual power consumption of at least one of the drive motor (203), the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) during operation of the pump unit (2), and
 - tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) depending on the determined actual power consumption during operation of the pump unit (2).
11. The method according to claim 10, wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) so that the actual power consumption is minimised.
12. The method according to claim 10 or 11, further comprising determining a rate of change in actual power consumption in at least one of the drive motor (203), the frequency converter (209) and the voltage converter (207) during operation of the pump unit (2), and wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes the condition that the positive rate of change of the actual power consumption is below a defined threshold.
13. The method according to claim 12, wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes increasing the input voltage (U_{in}) in a pre-defined manner if said condition is not fulfilled.
14. The method according to any of the claims 10 to 13, determining the actual electrical power consumption includes determining the actual electrical power consumption in pre-defined temporal intervals or in an essentially continuous manner for tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) accordingly.
15. The method according to any of the claims 10 to 14, wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) within a voltage range between the minimum input voltage (U_{min}) and a reference voltage (U_{ref}) when the drive motor (203) is operated in a field-weakening mode, and wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) within a voltage range between the reference voltage (U_{ref}) and the maximum input voltage (U_{max}) when the drive motor (203) is operated in a non-field-weakening mode, wherein $U_{min} < U_{ref} < U_{max}$.
16. The method according to claim 15, including feeding back the reference voltage (U_{ref}) from the frequency converter (209) to the voltage converter (207).
17. The method according to any of the claims 10 to 16, further comprising signalling a determined total actual power consumption of a combined system of frequency converter (209), motor (203) and voltage converter (209) to the frequency converter (209).
18. The method according to any of the claims 10 to 17, wherein determining the actual power consumption includes determining a total actual power consumption of a combined system of frequency converter (209), motor (203) and voltage converter (209) using an approximate power consumption in the voltage converter (209) based on a look-up table and/or a determined actual power consumption in the frequency converter (209) and/or the input voltage (U_{in}).
19. The method according to any of the claims 10 to 18, further including determining a power consumption differential (ΔP) between the power consumption when the input voltage (U_{in}) is provided and the power consumption when another input voltage (U_{in}) was previously provided, wherein tuning the input voltage (U_{in}) includes changing the input voltage (U_{in}) by a voltage differential (ΔU), wherein the sign and/or the amount of the voltage differential (ΔU) is dependent on the determined power consumption differential (ΔP).

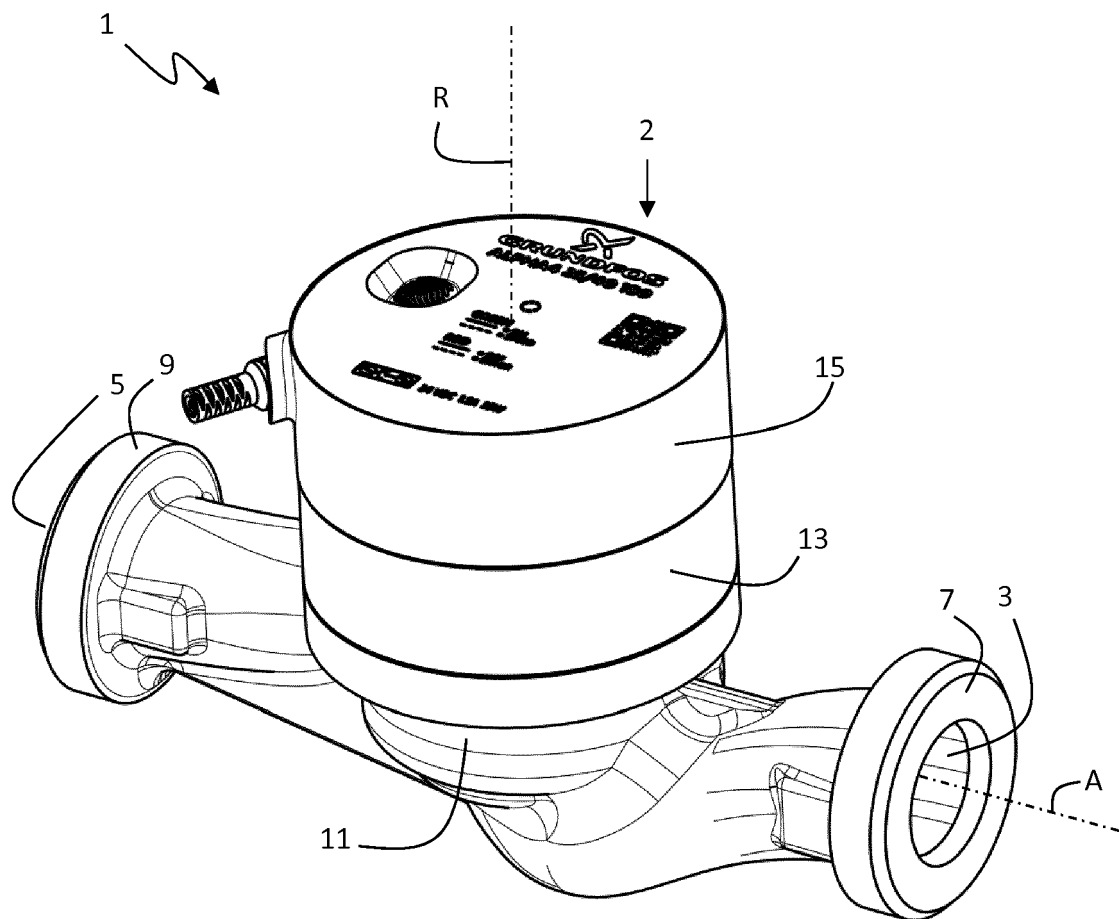


Fig. 1

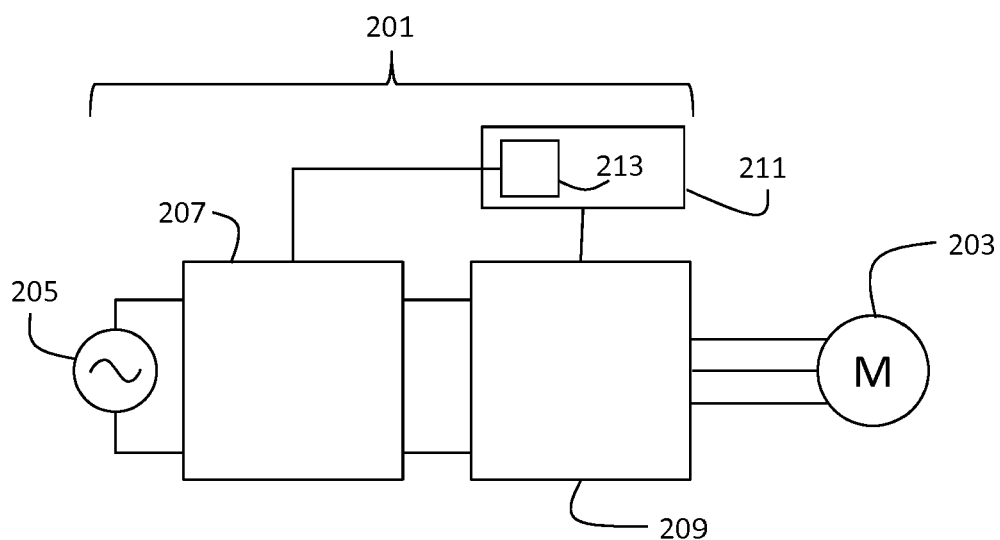


Fig. 2

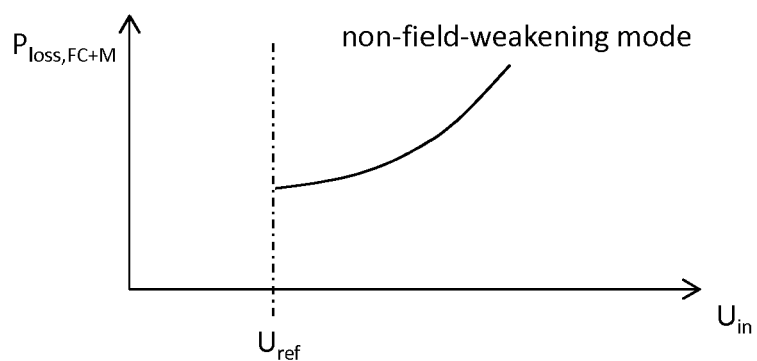


Fig. 3

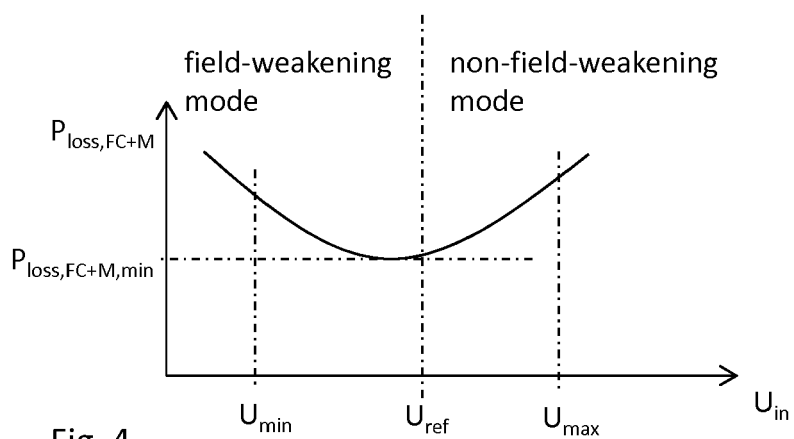


Fig. 4

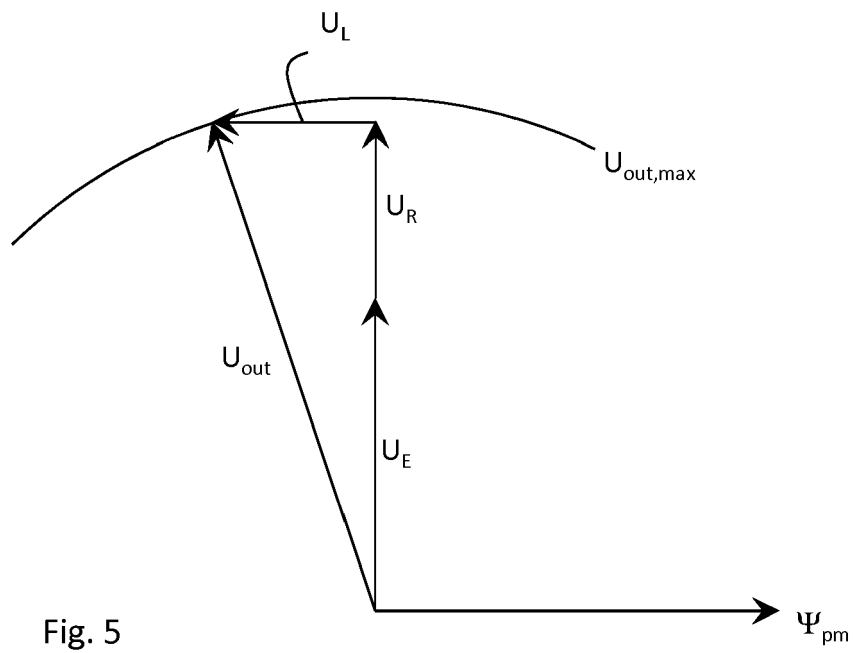


Fig. 5

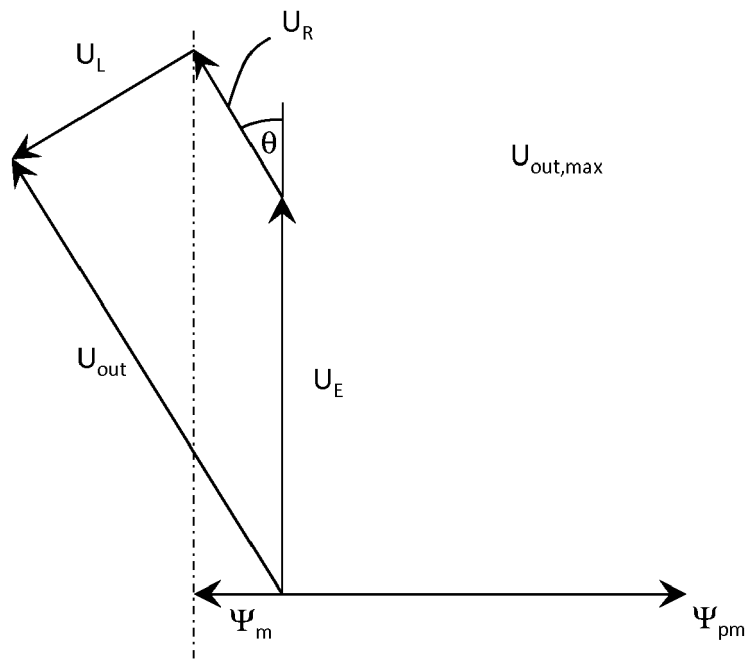


Fig. 6

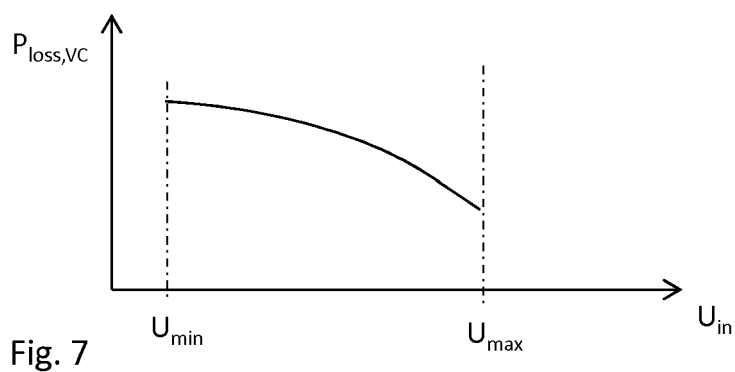


Fig. 7

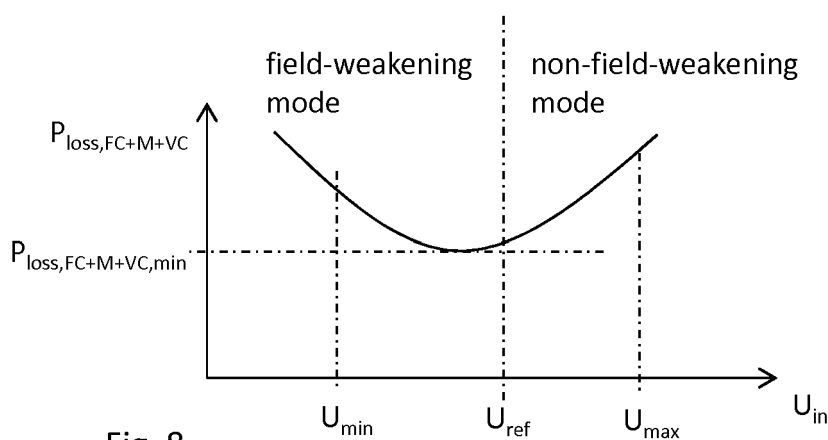


Fig. 8

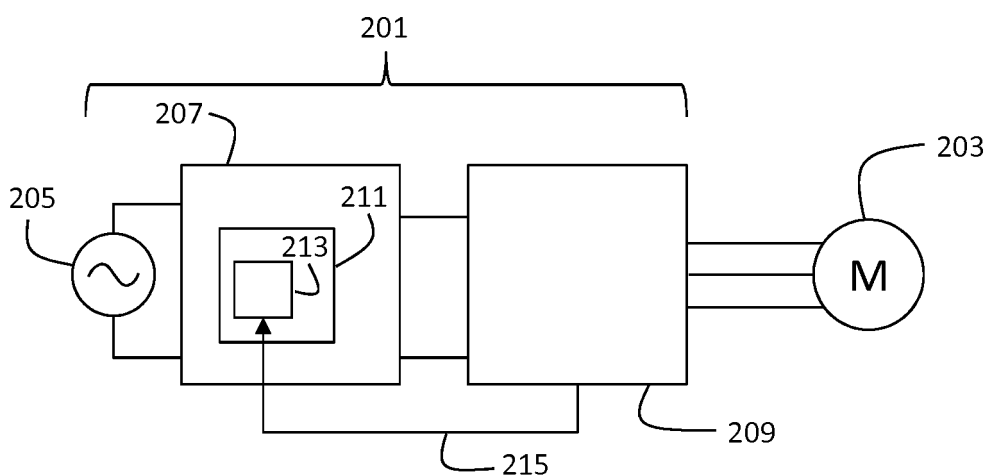


Fig. 9

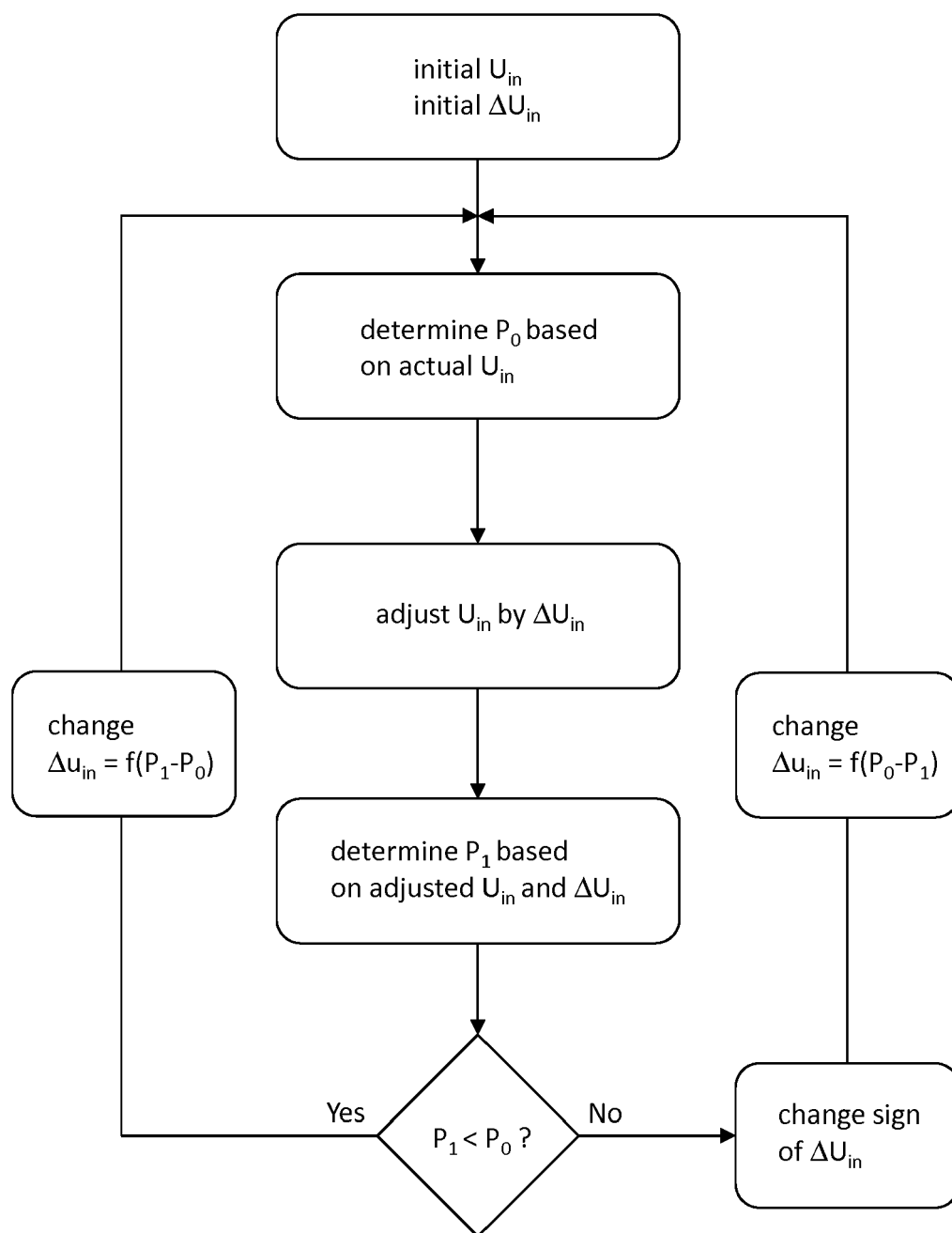


Fig. 10



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Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 10 October 2017	Examiner Roider, Anton
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